

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1033  
By Shepard

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Freeman Dwane Bennett for his many years of outstanding service to Charlotte High School, Dickson County and the State of Tennessee.

WHEREAS, at times in the history of this great state the legacy and impact of one individual on his community, his fellow citizens and generations yet to come extend farther than any scale can measure; and

WHEREAS, such a truly noble gentleman is Freeman Dwane Bennett of Dickson County, who served as a role model for all during his exemplary thirty-eight year career as an educator, touching the lives of generations of students as principal of Charlotte High School for over twenty years; and

WHEREAS, born on September 6, 1922, near the Buchanan community in Henry Country, Tennessee, Freeman Dwane Bennett, along with his sister, Olivene, and brothers, Walter and Brandon, was raised on a farm in that rural community by his parents, Freeman and Arabelle Bridges Bennett; and

WHEREAS, attending school in Buchanan, Mr. Bennett graduated as the class valedictorian in 1939, before enrolling at the University of Tennessee at Martin Junior College, where he earned a two-year certificate; and

WHEREAS, while continuing his college education at Austin Peay in Clarksville, Tennessee, Freeman Dwane Bennett met fellow student, Doris Mae Patey, his future bride; this outstanding couple were married on October 17, 1942; and

WHEREAS, a member of our country's Greatest Generation, F. D. Bennett proudly served in the armed forces during World War II and was inducted into the United States Army on November 30, 1942; and

WHEREAS, originally assigned to the 783<sup>rd</sup> Military Police Battalion, Mr. Bennett was transferred to the 240<sup>th</sup> Military Police Battalion stationed at Hyde Park, New York; serving as a military policeman from June 1943 to May 1945, at President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's estate, he was a member of an honor guard at President Roosevelt's funeral; and

WHEREAS, finishing his military service in South Carolina, F.D. Bennett received his honorable discharge at Fort McPherson, Georgia, on February 8, 1946, before returning to Tennessee to settle in Dickson County, the home of his beloved wife Doris; and

WHEREAS, after completing his education at Austin Peay, F. D. Bennett began his career as an educator in Dickson County in the fall of 1946, teaching chemistry, physics, biology and general science at the twelve-grade Charlotte School where his wife Doris was employed as an elementary school teacher; and

WHEREAS, F. D. Bennett would dutifully earn a graduate degree in Education from George Peabody College for Teachers, now part of Vanderbilt University, by attending school in the summers of 1947-49; and

WHEREAS, in December 1946, as a result of the mid-term departure of the former principal, F.D. Bennett was named Principal of the Charlotte School, a post he would hold for the next twenty-one years; and

WHEREAS, during his tenure a new school was built in the 1950s and a new high school building, Charlotte High School, was completed in time for the 1964 school year with F.D. Bennett serving as Principal; and

WHEREAS, under the leadership and guidance of Principal Bennett, Charlotte High School won accreditation by the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges, becoming a member in 1965; and

WHEREAS, earning the respect and admiration of the Charlotte community, Principal F. D. Bennett saw his school gain in stature and prominence with increased attendance and a devoted school faculty and staff that worked hard to help every student reach his or her highest potential; and

WHEREAS, generations of former students, both at Charlotte High School and its predecessor Charlotte School, continue to pay dutiful homage when recalling stories of Principal

Bennett during their era, acknowledging his sense of order and purpose with both awe and reverence; and

WHEREAS, in 1967, Mr. Bennett was named Supervisor of Instruction in the Dickson County School system, in which capacity he helped develop the plans for the new, centralized high school, Dickson County High School, that would be opened in the fall of 1972; and

WHEREAS, a highly skilled educator and true leader, F. D. Bennett would retire in 1984 after seventeen years as Supervisor of Instruction for Dickson County, completing thirty-eight years of remarkable service to the children of Charlotte and Dickson County; and

WHEREAS, also completing a laudable career as an educator, Mrs. Doris Bennett taught elementary school for thirty-five years, primarily fourth and fifth grades, sharing her love of learning and being a positive influence on countless young lives; and

WHEREAS, a truly loving and devoted couple, F.D. Bennett and Doris Bennett will celebrate their sixty-fourth wedding anniversary this fall; this joyous union has produced two devoted and highly successful children and one treasured grandson: daughter Betsy, who is the Executive Vice President of the American Board of Pathology, and son Andy, who is the Chief Deputy in the Office of the Tennessee Attorney General and Reporter, and along with his wife, the former Sidney Forester, has one son, Adam; and

WHEREAS, as a most appropriate tribute, on October 15, 2006, the alumni and former faculty and staff of Charlotte High School will hold a reunion that will include a very special ceremony to honor their beloved principal, F.D. Bennett, for his many years of laudable and distinguished service to the school; and

WHEREAS, such a display by the alumni and former faculty of Charlotte High School is a well-deserved tribute for such a legendary figure in their community, their county, and the State of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, it is especially appropriate for this General Assembly to honor such an extraordinary man who truly epitomizes the very definition's of the words dignity, determination and commitment, becoming a role model for all who know him and whose lives he has touched; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby commend Freeman Dwane Bennett on his lifetime of achievement and join with the alumni and former faculty of Charlotte High School in honoring him for his many years of outstanding service to the people of Dickson County and the State of Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.